

SPECIAL MEETING-MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
April 21, 2008

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the special meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Mansfield Community Center.

I. ROLL CALL

- Present: Blair, Clouette, Duffy, Haddad, Koehn, Nesbitt, Paterson, Paulhus, Schaefer

II. OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

- Charlie Eaton, Lorraine Drive, thanked the Town Manager, Matt Hart, for a basically flat town government budget. Mr. Eaton expressed his wish that the Board of Education had done the same and urged the Council to tell the Board of Education their cut was not enough.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, urged the Council not to go forward with the Downtown Partnership Project saying this is not the right economic time. (Statement Attached)

Mayor Paterson requested Item 3 Rules of Procedure be the next item on the agenda. By consensus the Council agreed.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Adoption of Budget and Recommended Appropriations

Cherie Trahan, Controller, presented information on two of the flagged items noting the estimated 07/08 conveyance tax has been increased to \$220,000 and the interest income has been reduced to \$550,000.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the Manager's proposed budget with the following modifications:

1. Increase budgeted salary & benefits for Registrars - \$30,000
2. Increase legal budget for Planning and Zoning - \$5,000
3. Reduce transfer to Capital Projects – (\$50,000)
4. Reduce transfer to Parks and Recreation – (\$25,000)

Mr. Schaefer noted that with these changes the Town Government Budget will have increased 1.9% and the mill rate increase would be 1.37 mills.

Reviewing the changes, Town Manager Matt Hart commented that the Registrars' salary is now based on estimated work requirements, the GIS mapping for the Planning Department has been restored, the Town Council Media project has been deferred and new funding has been eliminated for the Southeast Park project. Comptroller Cherie Trahan explained the transfers from the General Fund would go over to the CNR fund, which will then support the Capital Projects. The \$50,000 reduction in the transfer into the CNR was accomplished by the changes described above and a few minor lease purchase changes.

Council member discussed the proposed amendments.

Mr. Nesbitt moved to divide the question and requested a vote on each of the four proposed amendments and the motion to approve the General Fund budget. Seconded by Ms Koehn.

The motion passed with Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Clouette in opposition.

Mayor Paterson asked for a vote on the increase budgeted salary and benefits for the Registrars. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Paterson asked for a vote on the increase to the legal budget for Planning and Zoning. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Paterson asked for a vote on the reduction of the transfer to Capital Projects. Motion passed with Ms. Koehn in opposition.

Mayor Paterson asked for a vote on the reduction of the transfer to Parks and Recreation. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to adopt the Manager's proposed budget with the approved changes.

Mr. Nesbitt moved and Ms. Koehn seconded to amend the main motion by reducing the Downtown Partnership expenditure by \$62,000. Motion was defeated with all in opposition except Mr. Nesbitt.

Mr. Nesbitt moved and Ms. Koehn seconded to decrease the transfer out to the Parks and Recreation Fund by \$50,000. Mr. Nesbitt offered this motion as an incentive to management to put into place some of the changes presented by the recent study. Motion failed with all opposed except for Mr. Nesbitt.

Mr. Schafer moved and Ms. Blair seconded to increase the contribution to the Windham Area No Freeze by \$500. Motion passed with Mr. Schaefer, Mayor Paterson, Mr. Haddad, Mr. Clouette and Ms. Blair in favor, Mr. Nesbitt, Mr. Paulhus and Ms. Koehn in opposition and Ms. Duffy abstaining.

Ms. Koehn moved and Mr. Nesbitt seconded to add a \$25,000 transfer to the CNR Fund for the telemedia project.

Members agreed that if funds become available during the year the issue could be revisited.

Motion failed with all in opposition.

Ms. Blair requested an item she flagged, increasing hours for the Fire and Emergency Services administration assistant, be revisited during the year.

Motion to approve the Manager's proposed budget with adopted changes passed with all in favor except Ms. Koehn who was in opposition.

Mr. Schaefer and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the Capital Fund Budget for the Town of Mansfield, appended totaling \$2,586,300 is hereby adopted as the capital improvements to be undertaken during fiscal year 2008/09 or later years.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED: That the proposed Capital and Non-Recurring Reserve Fund Budget for fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 in the amount of \$663,085 be adopted.

Director of Finance Jeff Smith noted that the amount projected as Interest Income would not be realized this year, therefore at the end of next fiscal year a negative number is shown. He recommended Council go ahead and pass the budget this year and if we receive additional money from the state the shortfall would be addressed. If additional money is not received then he will return to the Council and make the necessary adjustments.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the following resolution:

It is further resolved, that the following Appropriations Act be recommended for adoption at the Annual Town Meeting for budget consideration:

RESOLVED: That the proposed General Fund Budget for the Town of Mansfield for fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 in the amount of \$33,580,440 which proposed budget was adopted by the Council on April 21, 2008, be adopted and that the sums estimated and set forth in said budget be appropriated for the purpose indicated.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the following resolution:

It is further resolved, that the following Appropriations Act be recommended for adoption at the Annual Town Meeting for budget consideration:

RESOLVED: That in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-51, the proportionate share for the Town of Mansfield of the annual budget for Regional School District No. 19 shall be added to the General Fund Budget appropriation for the Town of Mansfield for fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 and said sums shall be paid by the Town to the Regional School District as they become available.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the following resolution:

It is further resolved, that the following Appropriations Act be recommended for

adoption at the Annual Town Meeting for budget consideration:

RESOLVED: That the proposed Capital Projects Budget for fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 in the amount of \$2,586,300 be adopted provided that the portion proposed to be funded by bonds or notes shall, at the appropriate times, be introduced for action by the Town Council subject to a vote by referendum as required by Section 407 of the Town Charter.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Schaefer moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the following resolution:

It is further resolved, that the following Appropriations Act be recommended for adoption at the Annual Town Meeting for budget consideration:

RESOLVED: That the proposed Capital and Non-Recurring Reserve Fund Budget for fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009 in the amount of \$663,085 be adopted.

Motion passed unanimously.

2. Review of Material for Town Meeting.

Materials are being prepared for the Town Meeting in an attempt to make the process as straightforward as possible for residents. Controller Cherie Trahan has started to work on the list of programs that maybe changed at the meeting. Mr. Clouette suggested a flow chart showing the provisions of the new Charter be available for the public. Members also suggested the Moderator explain the process and that staff be available to make the necessary adjustments to all relevant sections of the budget as it becomes necessary.

Mayor Paterson reported both childcare and rides would be coordinated through the Department of Human Services. The Town Clerk will coordinate the voting procedures with the Registrars of Voters. The League of Women voters will be offering refreshments.

3. Rules of Procedure for Town Meeting

Town Attorney Dennis O'Brien was present to answer questions about establishing rules for the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Clouette suggested a rule not allowing a motion to close debate until everyone wishing to speak has had the opportunity to do so. Attorney O'Brien, referencing CGS § 7-7, noted that rules other than standard parliamentary procedure must be enacted by ordinance. Mr. Nesbitt commented that at a CCM meeting for newly elected officials he was told the Council has the ability to set whatever rules they wish. Attorney O'Brien will review relevant case law and the Town Manager will forward the CCM speaker's contact information to Attorney O'Brien. Information will be presented at the April 28th Town Council meeting. Attorney O'Brien also noted the Charter states that the budget adoption vote shall be by paper ballot.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, asked a number of questions regarding specifics of the budget and asked how she would approach making a motion to change a program at the Town Meeting. She also asked if all votes at the Town Meeting could be by ballot if a motion to that affect was made and passed. The Town Manager will ask Attorney O'Brien for an opinion.

Mr. Haddad suggested that staff be available at the next information session to assist residents who might like to make changes to the budget.

Mike Sikoski, Wildwood Road, asked why it couldn't be easy to add money back into the budget and have staff take care of adjusting the necessary line items.

Council members agreed that it should be made as simple as possible realizing the budget is a complicated document.

V. ADJOURNMENT

- Ms. Blair moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk